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RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC PRIORITY
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RHMFISS/JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L NIAMEY 000091

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SUBJECT: NIGER: FURTHER UPDATE ON RELATIONS WITH IRAN

REF: A.) NIAMEY 0071
 1B. NIAMEY 0055
 1C. USDAO NIAMEY IIR 6 928 0028 10 DATED 19 JANUARY
 2010

Classified By: CDA Eric P. Whitaker, Reason: Section 1.4 (b) and (d)

1. (SBU) On February 1, local independent weekly newspaper "Le Canard Dechaine" claimed that President Tandja would likely visit Iran to seek funds for the 2010 budget, rather than Prime Minister Gamatie as discussed in reftels. The account added that visits to Venezuela and Cuba, as well as recent meetings with officials from China and Libya, had not resulted in Niger obtaining critical financial resources. The article went on to claim that Niger might agree to export uranium to Iran to do so.

2. (SBU) Furthermore, on January 29, Tehran's "Mehr News Agency" in English, as provided by Open Source Center (OSC), stated that Iranian Minister of Industry and Mines Ali-Akbar Mehrabian and Nigerian Minister of Agricultural Development Mahaman Moussa signed a memorandum of understanding on January 29 in Tehran to broaden bilateral cooperation in mineral resource exploration and extraction. The account noted that Iran would assist Niger in exploration, establishment of a geological center, and education of specialists in mineral exploration and extraction. Nigerian Minister of Commerce, Industry, and Standardization Halidou Badje stated that Niger also seeks cooperation with Iran in the sectors of agriculture and education.

3. (SBU) According to a February 1 account of Tehran's "Iranian Students News Agency" in English as provided by OSC account, Iran's Minister of Foreign Affairs Manouchehr Mottaki met Nigerian Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation Aichatou Mindaoudou in Addis Ababa on the sidelines of the 14th African Union Summit.

4. (C/NF) Finally, Embassy Niamey Public Diplomacy locally engaged staff (LES)(protect) advised CDA in an unprompted manner on January 26 that Shia-oriented programming on local radio and television had gradually increased over the past two to three years, apparently from Iranian sources.
WHITAKER